

# King County Councilmember

# Julia PATTERSON



#### Chair:

- Utilities Committee
- Regional Policy Committee

#### Member:

- Transportation Committee
- Regional Transit Committee
- Regional Water Quality Committee

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District 13

Winter 2003

## **Council Adopts 2003 Budget: Praised as the most efficient in recent memory**

This Fall the King County Council was charged with closing a \$53 million revenue shortfall for its 2003 Budget. The entire general fund budget is approximately \$488 million, so this cut equals approximately 10 percent of the total budget. The budget gap was a result of a number of factors, including the stagnant economy, voter approved initiatives, recent annexations by suburban cities, a reduction in sales tax collections and rising employee and inmate healthcare costs. Given these realities, the county was faced with a general fund shortfall of \$53 million. This fund supports criminal justice, human services, parks and recreation, the County assessor's office as well as basic county services, such as records, elections, licensing, courts, and many other services.

The budget closes the \$53 million gap through a number of policy initiatives taken prior to the passage of the final budget that include:

Adoption of the Adult Justice Operational Master Plan (AJOMP). This new law helps free up jail space and save money in jail costs. It utilizes drug court, mental health court and electronic home-monitoring. Moving nonviolent offenders out of costly secure detention in the jails will reduce escalating expenses and allow for reinvestment of the savings in programs that help reduce overall crime. Without these reductions in costs, by 2007 the costs of the county's criminal justice system would entirely consume the general fund.

Transfer of Park and Pool Facilities. The county worked to transfer parks and pools to cities and organizations that were willing to operate and maintain them for the benefit of local residents. The council budget continues funding the maintenance and operation of regional facilities, such as Marymoor Park and the King County Aquatic Center in Federal Way.

Creation of a new Cultural Development Authority (CDA) of King County. The creation of the CDA allows for the use of public and private funding sources for cultural programs, projects, and activities outside of the County's general fund. The CDA board will be responsible for overseeing the business, property, and affairs of the CDA.

The tough choices we dealt with in constructing this year's budget will loom again in 2003 when we will again be faced with cutting another \$23 million dollars.

## What does King County do for me?

With a population greater than 1.7 million people, King County is the 12th largest of the nation's 3100 counties. King County is larger than ten states and is home to nearly 1 in 4 citizens of Washington.

### *Every day King County:*

- Provides about 274,000 rides on Metro (if you lined up 274,000 cars end to end, the line would extend 882 miles);
- Maintains 200 miles of hiking and biking trails as well as regional parks;
- Treats 192 million gallons of wastewater;
- Processes 168 men and women into the regional jails (over a year that's about enough people to fill Safeco Field and Key Arena);
- Maintains a road system 1,900 miles long (about the distance from here to Chicago); and
- Serves as the local government for the 352,000 residents of unincorporated King County.

## Green River Trail

Councilmember Patterson secured funding from the general capital improvement program fund for the development of a key section of the Green River Trail. Currently, the Green River Trail runs from South Seattle to the North Green River Park. It is 12 miles long. Funding will be used as seed money in order to gain a matching Federal grant to contribute 85% of the total project costs. Once this section is completed, the trail will connect downtown Kent with the City of Auburn. The trail will intersect the interurban trail, which stretches all the way south to Pacific and north to I-405 in Tukwila.

The Interurban and Green River Trails will comprise a system of 46 miles. Some believe it will rival the popular Burke-Gilman trail in Seattle, with users per year of 750,000 people.



*Councilmember Julia Patterson (right) and Karen Schotter with her dog Tyler meet on the Green River Trail.*

## Transit Improvements

### Increased Bus Service

South King County could get from 48,000 to 160,000 hours of new bus service over the next six years, based on sales tax collection levels. In 2003, we anticipate over 1,000 additional bus hours per month for our area. Under a new plan approved in September by the King County Council, South King County will get 40% of all new bus service hours, thereby providing the suburbs a greater share of new transit services. While the suburbs have been generating about two-thirds of the revenue for county bus service, they have been getting only one-third of the service.

### Commuter Bus in Kent

Beginning this February, the Kent intra-city bus service project will begin serving commuters and residents in the greater Kent area. This bus service will connect the downtown Kent Sound Transit station with Kent's industrial valley employers. It will make it easier for residents to travel to and from downtown Kent. For further information regarding hours of operation and the route, call Cathy Mooney at (253) 856-5563.

"We are grateful for Julia's help in making this important transit connection for Kent residents and employers. We believe this service will make Kent an even better place to work."

**—Jim White, Mayor, City of Kent**

### Metro Bus Shelters Serving Kent, Normandy Park, and Burien

During the 2002 budget cycle, Councilmember Patterson was able to successfully secure funding for 4 additional bus shelters in our district. The new shelter in Kent has already been installed and is now a candidate for the popular Bus Shelter Mural Program\*. The Kent shelter is located on northbound 68<sup>th</sup> S. (West Valley Hwy) at S. 212<sup>th</sup> Street. Three additional shelters are scheduled for completion in 2003. One will be located in the City of SeaTac at Pacific Hwy and 192<sup>nd</sup>, and two will be located along 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue S. in the

**continued on next page**



# Transit Improvements continued

Normandy Park/Burien area – one at 176<sup>th</sup> and the other at Normandy Road.

\*A program where youth and other members of the community design and paint the bus shelter murals (donating their artistic abilities and talent), and the County pays for the panels and the paint. For further information, contact (206) 296-1013.

## District 13 Highlights

### Surplus Van Program

A van from the surplus van program was donated to the Highline YMCA. This 15 passenger van will be used for teen programs, caravans and day trips, as well as for our senior citizens with limited transportation options. Non-profit organizations can contact Kimberly Lockard, District Director for Council District 13, at (206) 296-0313 for information regarding the 2003 Van Surplus Program.



*Councilmember Patterson hands over the keys to Megan DeHan, Youth Development Director from the Highline YMCA, for their new van.*

### Auburn's Intelligent Traffic System

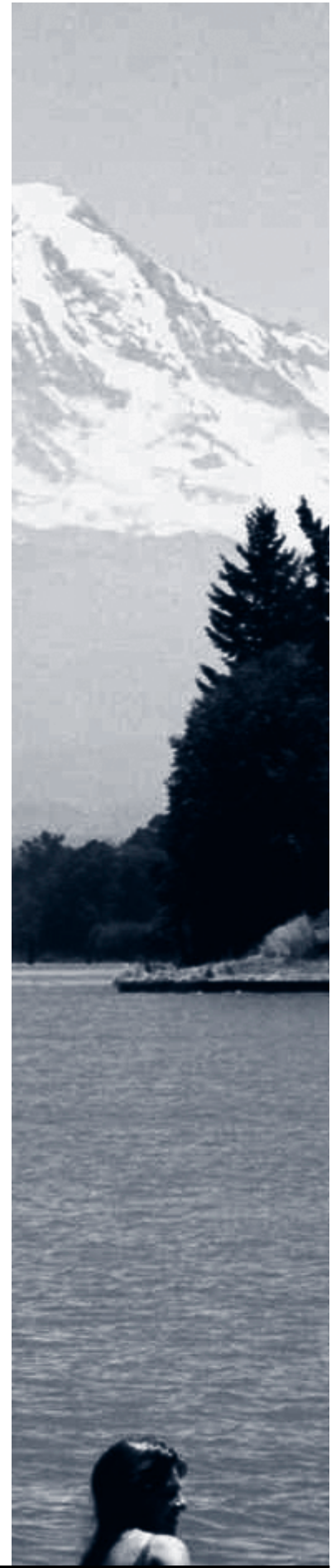
The City of Auburn will receive county funding to help with its traffic light synchronization plan. Councilmember Patterson successfully earmarked funding for the project, which will help alleviate traffic snarls along Auburn Way South by synchronizing the operation of traffic light signals. Councilmember Patterson and the county will be working closely with Mayor Pete Lewis, who has been instrumental in helping this important project move forward. Business's and residents in Auburn depend upon traffic moving efficiently along Auburn Way South – the only major north/south arterial in and out of the southern portion of the city. Provided adequate funding is secured, the project is expected to be complete in 2004.

### Highline Community College Grant for Marine Science Center

Councilmember Julia Patterson joined forces with Councilmembers Dow Constantine of Burien and Pete von Reichbauer of Federal Way to garner funding for Highline Community College's Marine Science and Technology Center at Redondo Beach from the County's Water Works grant program. This unique waterfront laboratory will be a year round, multi-use facility that will educate, provide research opportunities, community outreach and environmental monitoring. It will increase environmental health awareness, literacy and promote stewardship of the environment. The facility will be used by the College, the local K-12 system, and community members.

### Sidewalks in Lea Hill Neighborhood

Both the Rainier Middle School and Hazelwood Elementary School in the unincorporated area in the Lea Hill neighborhood will benefit from funding secured in the 2003 Budget for a sidewalk along 112<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE from SE 304<sup>th</sup> to SE 301<sup>st</sup> Way. According to Michael Meagher, School Safety Engineer for King County, this location is in need of a sidewalk for the safety of our school children, as well as for general pedestrian's safety.





**Councilmember**  
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## **Patterson Introduces Legislation Creating Commission on Governance**

**Panel Will Look at Ways to Improve County Government**

On December 6, 2002 the Metropolitan King County Council voted to create the King County Commission on Governance. The Commission will consist of nine members from the academic, labor, and business communities who will examine the structure and operations of King County government. Councilmember Patterson prime sponsored this legislation and was joined by 11 of her colleagues who recognize how important it is that we take an objective and nonpartisan look at King County government.

The Commission on Governance will provide the most comprehensive evaluation of King County government since the passage of the County Charter in 1968. With the County facing future budget shortfalls, the commission will provide objective recommendations on how we can implement long term solutions to the county's fiscal challenges.

Its responsibilities will include:

- Analysis of which services are most appropriate for King County government to provide.
- Recommendations on the tax structure of county government and how to develop stable sources of funding for services.
- Determine if elected county officials should be partisan or non-partisan.
- Determine if certain county officials should be elected or appointed.
- Study the size and structure of King County government, including all elected county offices.
- Analyze the size and structure of the King County Council, including the number of councilmembers, staffing and salaries.

King County government must respond to the challenges facing this region and its citizens. The commission will make recommendations on how we can more effectively and efficiently meet the needs of King County residents.

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